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# THE QUARTERLY

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THE TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION AND  
ITS WORK.

D. F. HOUSTON.

The Texas State Historical Association has reached a respectable age, as things go in this country of rapid movement. We may say that it is an established organization and one that has justified itself. It enters upon its twelfth year today, with a membership of over two thousand of the most intelligent and influential men and women of Texas, and I think I state a simple fact and convey no unfavorable implication when I say that this number might easily have been doubled. This is a very significant and gratifying fact, and testified both to the intellectual and patriotic interest of our people in the matter of broad and profound concern to our country and also to the efficiency of the Association.

The stability and effectiveness of the Association are especially evidenced by its sound financial condition. It has not only met all its operating expenses, but has accumulated a working reserve of over \$2000; and it has done this apparently with little effort and without annoyance to subscribers or managers. This is an achievement almost without parallel in similar enterprises. The Association has supported a journal, which has afforded a medium for the publication of many valuable articles and documents furnished by members of the History staff in the University and by active investigators throughout the State and elsewhere. This

journal has taken a most creditable place among historical publications, and, together with the formal works of professors in the University, has given distinction to Texas as a center of historical research, and especially as one of the two sources of contributions to Southwestern history. Through these contributions many misconceptions have been dispelled, historical truth has been revealed, and much rewriting of history has been necessitated.

The Association has served to draw together many men and women in the State whose purpose is to collect and preserve the records of a great people in a great section, to see that they are interpreted without bias and with rigid fidelity to truth, and in a more general way, everywhere and at all hazards, to protect and promote the freedom of historical study and teaching. It has discovered and brought out, so to speak, and encouraged many competent investigators in different sections of the State, and has afforded much support and assistance to professors and students of history in colleges and universities.

But we are yet only at the beginning. We have scarcely yet scratched the surface of things. There is an amazingly vast and rich store of records to be secured and examined, scattered through these Southwestern States, in the archives of Mexico, and of Spain, and of other nations. And, furthermore, there is a more amazing amount of record to be made in the present and future and to be preserved. The South has seemed to be content to make history and to have certain contempt for recording her deeds, for accumulating her materials, and for interpreting them to the world. It is a reproach to every Southern State and community that a student of its history should be compelled to go to the great libraries of the North and East for access to historical data, and a still greater reproach that facilities have not been provided anywhere in the entire Southland, with its wealth of ten or twelve billions of dollars and its population of twenty-five millions, sufficiently to make it possible adequately to prosecute research in history and economics and to make it possible to train Southern men and women to write history and economics. There is today nowhere in any institution in the South, a graduate school, nowhere libraries or laboratories sufficiently well equipped to make extended research possible, and nowhere a teaching staff with suf-

ficient time to direct graduate investigation. In no institution in the South today are there more than two separate professorships of history, or more than one professorship of economics. There are very few institutions in the South which have one professor who gives his entire time to history, and there are not more than a half dozen who have separate professors of economics or political science. Not as many of either, in the entire South, devote their time exclusively to history and economics as can be found in one great institution in the North or East; and these are compelled to devote their time mainly to undergraduate teaching. And nowhere in the South are aids to students furnished in the way of endowed scholarships and fellowships. What chance have Southern boys and girls? What chance is there for an early full revelation of the truth about Southern life and deeds and motives? Would not provision for great libraries and a stronger teaching and research force be a more effective guarantee of historical truth than any amount of violent protest against historical misinterpretation and inaccuracy? Can Southern people, can Texas people, be brought to see this matter in the proper light and induced to provide the necessary support? I think they can, and I think this Association is the most satisfactory and efficient agency for bringing them to see it. Let us plan to have here in the near future a great library in which Southwestern history will be properly represented and also to have a strong graduate school for research and production. The University is doing what it can with limited means and is taking advantage of Dr. Bolton's presence in Mexico to collect important documents. The pity is that the amount is not ten times as great as it is. The money is needed, and needed now while expert service is available, and a great opportunity is here presented to some patriotic man of means.

Finally, there is one thing which this Association can do without means. I have mentioned it in passing. It is the most important thing which can be done at all, and if not done, it makes all else vain and worse than useless. It can protect and promote everywhere freedom of historical inquiry, historical writing, and history teaching. No nation, and no section of this or of any other nation has a monopoly either of prejudice or of intellectual liberty and openness of mind, or will ever have. But that fact can not

deter real students of history from battling for the truth and the whole truth, no matter where it leads or what prejudices it encounters or traditions it upsets. It was long ago asserted by sacred authority that the truth alone makes for freedom and no man can render a greater service anywhere in this nation than to fight for a full opportunity for every individual to express himself fully and freely on every matter as his honest intelligence prompts him to do.